

Weed and Seed Training and Supplemental Materials for 2004 Continuation Funding Applicants

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2004 NATIONAL DIRECTORY UPDATE

PLEASE PROVIDE COMPLETE AND ACCURATE INFORMATION FOR THE FOLLOWING REPRESENTATIVES:

DATE: _____

NAME OF SITE: _____ SITE ID# (from site list): _____

UNITED STATES ATTORNEY	GRANTEE OFFICIAL POINT OF CONTACT
Name: _____ Title: _____ District: _____ Address: _____ _____ Phone: _____ Fax: _____ E-Mail: _____	Name: _____ Title: _____ Agency: _____ Address: _____ _____ Phone: _____ Fax: _____ E-Mail: _____
USAO CONTACT	DAY TO DAY COORDINATOR
Name: _____ Title: _____ Agency: _____ Address: _____ _____ Phone: _____ Fax: _____ E-Mail: _____	Name: _____ Title: _____ Agency: _____ Address: _____ _____ Phone: _____ Fax: _____ E-Mail: _____ (Important)
CHIEF OF POLICE	LAW ENFORCEMENT/AFF CONTACT
Name: _____ Title: _____ Agency: _____ Address: _____ _____ Phone: _____ Fax: _____ E-Mail: _____	Name: _____ Title: _____ Agency: _____ Address: _____ _____ Phone: _____ Fax: _____ E-Mail: _____

Definitions

- 1) **United States Attorney** - current United States Attorney serving the site's district.
- 2) **USAO Contact** - contact person at the U.S. Attorney's Office who provides assistance and support to the Weed and Seed site (e.g. LECC Coordinator, Assistant U.S. Attorney, etc.)
- 3) **Chief of Police** - Chief of Police serving the Weed and Seed designated area.
- 4) **Grantee Official Point of Contact** - person to be contacted on official matters involving this application and authorized to enter into contracts for the agency (e.g. person who signed application).
- 5) **Day to Day Coordinator** - person who handles the day-to-day operations and administrative requirements of the Weed and Seed strategy (e.g. coordinates Seeding and Weeding elements, prepares progress reports, organizes steering committee meetings, has continuous contact with the Executive Office for Weed and Seed on matters involving the grant and budget, etc.)
- 6) **L.E./AFF Contact** - person administering the asset forfeiture fund or law enforcement strategy in the designated area (e.g. weeding coordinator)

(Please attach a separate sheet with additional names if necessary)

Sample Letter of Non-Supplanting

[Applicant Letterhead]

[date]

Mr. Robert Samuels
Acting Director
Executive Office for Weed and Seed
Office of Justice Programs
810 7th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20531

Dear Mr. Samuels:

This letter serves as certification that Federal funds provided by the Office of Justice Programs, Executive Office for Weed and Seed, will not be used to supplant state or local funds. Federal funds will be used to supplement existing funds for Weed and Seed program activities and will not replace those funds which have been appropriated for the same purpose.

[Applicant's Authorized Official]

Site Development Benchmarks

Compliance with these benchmarks will be incorporated into each FY 2004 grant award as a Special Condition and will be the basis of future funding decisions.

First Year

Steering Committee establishes the site's organizational management structure with clear roles and responsibilities.

Steering Committee functions, meets monthly, and develops Site Coordinator's job description.

Hire Coordinator with Steering Committee approval.

Steering Committee works with Site Coordinator to determine and address program staffing needs.

Steering Committee develops Operational Policies and Procedures (clear expectations of staff and volunteers).

Site Coordinator works with Grantee (fiscal agent) to develop procedures necessary to track grant funds and ensure their timely expenditure.

Strategy implementation begins in all four elements (established timeline based on OR strategy). Baseline data to support goals and objectives of OR strategy collected.

Begin program publicity and outreach efforts to recruit neighborhood leaders and mobilize community.

Begin Coordinating efforts with local initiatives (i.e. coordinate law enforcement resources and activities).

Timely Submission of Fiscal Reports to EOWS/OJP on grant expenditures.

Timely Submission of Programmatic Progress Reports to provide measurable program outcome information. The site begins operations toward achieving the goals and objectives stated in the OR application and grant application.

Steering Committee and Site Coordinator evaluate site progress annually to determine site TA needs (if any).

Plan for next year (Activities, timelines, and budget) and program sustainment.

Second Year

Steering Committee continues to educate, guide and re-evaluate the organizational management structure, meets at least monthly.

Grantee (and/or USAO) Evaluates Coordinator Performance (annually) with Steering Committee input.

Continue program publicity and outreach efforts to recruit neighborhood leaders and mobilize community.

Continue to coordinate efforts with local initiatives (i.e. coordinate programs with local parks & recreation department).

Strategy implementation is underway in all four elements to achieve measurable outcomes, especially law enforcement/community policing (See OR application and scope of work provided in grant application). Continue data collection to support goals and objectives of OR strategy.

Special Emphasis Program developed by Steering Committee based on community needs and program implementation begun.

Communicate regularly with all partners to include USAO, EOWS and community members. All need to hear about site developments on a regular basis through newsletters, fax, neighborhood visits, email, community meetings, etc.

Timely Submission of Fiscal Reports to EOWS/OJP on grant expenditures.

Site Coordinator and Steering Committee (or sub-committee) work together to ensure timely expenditure of grant funds.

Timely Submission of Programmatic Progress Reports that provide measurable outcome information. The site continues to operate toward achieving the goals and objectives stated in the OR application and grant application.

Steering Committee and Site Coordinator evaluate site progress to determine TA needs (if any).

Steering Committee plans for next year (Activities, timelines and budget) and sustainment and begins initial plans for program evaluation.

Third Year

Steering Committee and organizational structure solidly functions, meets at least quarterly.

Grantee Evaluate Coordinator Performance (annually) with Steering Committee input

Establish sub-committee to Steering Committee to continue looking for additional funding or in-kind resources to ensure program sustainment.

Weed and Seed effort is beginning to be included in city/community plans.

Identify and build sustainable leadership among community members (new leaders to foster commitment and continue the work), while continuing to mobilize community through program publicity and outreach efforts.

Strategy implementation toward goals and objectives (measurable outcomes) in all four elements (See OR application and grant application).

Special Emphasis Program(s) fully operational.

Continue regular communication with all partners to include USAO, EOWS and community members.

All need to hear about site developments on a regular basis through newsletter, fax, neighborhood visits, email, community meetings, etc.

Timely Submission of Fiscal Reports to EOWS/OJP on grant expenditures.

Timely Submission of Programmatic Progress Reports that provide measurable outcome information. The site continues to operate toward achieving the goals and objectives stated in the OR application and grant application.

Steering Committee and Site Coordinator evaluate site progress to determine TA needs (if any).

Evaluation tool identified; preliminary evaluation plans developed based on EOWS site evaluation literature.

Steering Committee plans for next year (Activities, timelines and budget).

Fourth Year

Steering Committee and organization structure still solidly functioning, still meets at least quarterly.

Grantee Evaluates Coordinator Performance (annually) with Steering Committee input.

Sub-committee continues to search for additional resources beyond grant for program sustainment (funding and in-kind resources).

Community leaders have established working relationship with local officials.

Strategy implementation toward goals and objectives (measurable outcomes) in all four elements (based on site OR application and grant application).

Continue program publicity and outreach efforts to mobilize community and recruit new community leaders.

Communicate regularly with all partners to include USAO, EOWS and community members. All need to hear about things on a regular basis through newsletter, fax, neighborhood visits, email, community meetings, etc.

Timely Submission of Fiscal Reports to EOWS/OJP on grant expenditures.

Timely Submission of Programmatic Progress Reports that provide measurable outcome information. The site continues to operate toward achieving the goals and objectives stated in the OR application and grant application.

Site undergoes program evaluation to assess overall effectiveness of OR strategy implementation.

Site Coordinator and Steering Committee review previous years' grant applications to determine plans for final year of OR, including TA needs (activities, timelines and budget).

Fifth Year

Steering Committee and organization structure still solidly functioning, still meets at least quarterly.

Grantee Evaluates Coordinator Performance (annually) with Steering Committee input.

Sub-committee continues search for additional resources beyond grant for sustainment (funding and in-kind).

Plans are made to continue community development efforts and strategic planning through various funding sources.

Weed and Seed community is included in city/community planning.

Community Leaders identified and working to sustain efforts and continue community mobilization.

Timely Submission of Fiscal Reports to EOWS/OJP on grant expenditures.

Timely Submission of Programmatic Progress Reports that provide measurable outcome information. The final progress report provides information on the accomplishments and outcomes achieved toward the goals and objectives stated in the OR application.

Steering Committee determines if there is a need to continue program in other neighborhoods based on program evaluation findings and current crime statistics. If so, plans for next OR strategy are begun.

Full evaluation report available by end of fifth year that assesses overall program accomplishments and effectiveness.

FY 2004 Special Emphasis Initiative Areas

A. Gun Law Enforcement

This initiative seeks to reduce crime and violence involving guns in Weed and Seed sites and is designed to complement DOJ's major initiative for gun law enforcement, Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN). Sites should coordinate PSN and Weed and Seed efforts as much as possible. Programs in this area can include: (1) seizing illegal weapons; and (2) educating residents about gun crime and violence. The program can provide for police officers in designated areas to focus primarily on the seizure of illegal firearms (and the drug and gang crime that is often linked to gun crime). These officers will be specially trained by the U.S. Attorney's Office in innovative and appropriate law enforcement techniques that will withstand any constitutional challenge. Additionally, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) will provide assistance in tracing seized firearms. The program may include a "firearms prosecutor" whose sole responsibility is to coordinate the investigation and prosecution of firearms related cases. For information on PSN, applicants should visit www.psn.gov. Applicants can review examples of how PSN is being implemented in each U.S. Attorney district in the publication, "PSN in Practice," which can be found at www.psn.gov/media/pdf/PSNInPractice.pdf.

In budgeting for this area, applicants are encouraged to invest FY 2004 resources in the improvement of their crime analysis and mapping capacity. Technical assistance and training in crime mapping and analysis are available from the National Institute of Justice's Crime Mapping Research Center at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/maps/.

One Example of a Gun Law Enforcement Initiative

This program will focus on the identification (planning stage) of "gun hot spots" located within the Weed and Seed area. The Lieutenant Supervisor working together with the Precinct Captain, Detectives, the Crime Analyst, and Management Information personnel, will identify data criteria to be used for the identification of gun hot spots. This data will then be geographically plotted and accessible by members of the Gun Team and the other members of Precinct 12. The total time expected for this effort (including equipment acquisition and setup) will be approximately two to three months. The only disruption to this schedule would be significant delays in equipment purchase or setup.

A detail car consisting of two sworn officers will then be utilized during "high incidence periods" to aggressively attack illegal possession and usage of firearms in the targeted hot spots. These officers will work half shifts (either four or five hour shifts), and their initial focus will be on the seizure and removal of illegal firearms from the Weed and Seed area. This enforcement effort is expected to take anywhere from six to eight months before visible results are apparent. This is the implementation phase of the program. The major obstacle to accomplishing this objective may be that guns are even more prevalent than expected. If this occurs, it may require the full duration of the first year's funding without moving into the last stage of the program (maintenance stage).

The maintenance stage will involve continuous police presence in "gun hot spots," and the identification of new "gun hot spots" after order is restored to the originally identified sites. Police presence may include foot patrol and/or the continued usage of motorized patrol after order is restored to the most prevalent visible sites identified. The maintenance stage will take the duration of the project and will most likely require a longer sustaining effort in order to maintain the results achieved in the implementation stage.

The educational program component centers on the topic of gun crime and violence. The program can be in the form of school presentations, community center presentations, public service announcements, and other forms of outreach.

B. Justice Innovations

This initiative focuses on developing and implementing community-oriented criminal justice programming, to be integrated within Weed and Seed sites. Community justice encompasses innovative models for criminal justice that are problem-solving in their approach; integrated in a meaningful way to meet the needs of community, offenders and victims; and encourage partnerships between traditional and non-traditional participants in reducing crime and promoting public safety. These initiatives include such models as Community Corrections, Community Court, Community Prosecution, Alternative Sentencing for Juveniles, Teen Court, Drug Court, Neighborhood Public Safety Law, Mental Health Court, etc. In designing and implementing these initiatives, sites need to ensure that their steering committees include appropriate representatives from the local judiciary, local prosecutors, corrections, faith-based groups, and non-profit organizations engaged in the delivery of social services, substance abuse, or mental health treatment, and/or economic or community development activities. All planning and implementation activities should include representatives who live or work in the Weed and Seed area in which the Community Justice Initiative is to be located.

The Community Justice Initiative is directed at planning activities that can lead to the development and implementation of such models as community or specialized courts, community prosecution and community corrections activities in which the concept of community justice can be realized and developed to fit the needs of localities. A range of technical assistance for the development and implementation of these activities is available to sites that select this special emphasis initiative. Funding can include such items as staffing, travel for training, and contractual services. Additional resources for this subject area can be obtained from “**Additional Resources for Special Emphasis Initiatives**” on the Funding Opportunities page of the EOWS website at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/eows/funding.htm.

C. Faith-Based/Community-Based Initiatives

Initiatives in this category can include a wide variety of activities by faith-based and/or community-based entities to provide seeding activities including but not limited to the following, singularly or in combination: drug/alcohol demand reduction; drug/alcohol treatment; anti-gang activities; offender re-entry mentoring, tutoring, and job-preparedness training; after-school recreational activities; homeless shelters; and anti-truancy activities. This special emphasis area is especially intended to provide resources to small entities that have not previously received Federal funding. The grantee is encouraged to provide as much assistance as possible to subgrantees in complying with the requirements that accompany Federal funding. Information about some faith-based and community programs can be found at the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families website at www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/fbci/fbci_featured_progs.html.

D. Anti-Gang Crime Initiative

In developing their anti-gang strategies, sites are encouraged to use both law enforcement and prevention techniques to counter gang-related violent crime. Prevention approaches should be planned as part of a comprehensive approach, should focus on dealing with gang members as individuals, and can include school-based and community-based programs, such as programs for dealing with suspended students during and following suspension. Coordination with schools can help ensure that school disciplinary policies do not simply push out at-risk youth without providing alternative programs and supervision and do not expose youths to gang retaliation. In addition, Boys and Girls Clubs offer a Targeted Outreach Program to help kids stay out of gangs or leave gangs by providing a sense of acceptance, belonging, competence, and influence that youth otherwise seek from gang affiliation.

Prevention techniques can include problem-solving, anger control, empathy development, resistance to peer pressure, conflict resolution, drug and alcohol abuse prevention, and constructive life and employment skills.

Potential law enforcement approaches include combined police and probation patrols, communicating and implementing a policy of zero-tolerance for gang violence, injunctions restricting gang activities, increasing the swiftness of imposing sanctions for illegal activities, focusing on major offenders, reverse stings, sweeps, use of paid informants, drug house raids, gun seizure programs, and witness protection. Law enforcement approaches should emphasize coordination among Federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies to target and remove gang-related violent offenders and drug traffickers.

Further information on gangs can be obtained from the Regional Information Sharing System and the National Youth Gang Center, both of which can be accessed via the internet website: www.iir.com, and from the OJJDP Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse via 1-800-638-8736.

E. Anti-Drug/Alcohol Abuse Strategies

Initiatives in this category can include any element of drug and/or alcohol demand reduction, law enforcement, testing, or treatment. Examples include: drug market analysis; enforcement focusing on "hot spots" such as nuisance bars; drug testing part of pretrial supervision; frequent, random drug testing for probationers and parolees; drug prosecution; drug/alcohol treatment; the costs of operating or enhancing Drug Education For Youth (DEFY) leadership camps and follow-on mentoring activities; and Boys and Girls Club programs for teenagers as sequels to site DEFY activities.

Sample Strategy

In one community, West Side Addiction Services, Inc. will provide drug and alcohol screening and assessments for children and families in the Weed and Seed area. Two focus areas have been chosen--the Safe Haven Complex, and a public housing facility in close proximity to the Safe Haven known as Catherine Courts. In Catherine Courts, a social worker will be employed to conduct assessments with pregnant women/ mothers and families with children ages 0 to 5 years of age. The social worker will provide life skills management classes and counseling in small groups to families with known substance abuse problems, and will make referrals to appropriate agencies within the Weed and Seed community, and he will use internal resources. A lending library of educational materials will be developed for use by parents and children.

At the Safe Haven, the same social worker will provide group counseling to children who have been identified as at-risk for substance abuse or violent interaction with peers and will provide an opportunity for them to protect themselves from those risks. Educational materials will also be provided to this group of youth. This material will focus on risk behaviors that children are challenged with in their community.

The Drug-Free Communities Support Program is one potential funding source to assist sites in the fight to reduce substance abuse. Directed by the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) and administered by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), the program is designed to strengthen community-based coalitions' efforts in reducing substance abuse among youth. Eligible coalitions can apply for up to \$100,000 in FY 2002. The Drug-Free Communities Program solicitation will be available in mid-February. Application materials can be downloaded from the OJJDP web page at www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org/dfcs/index.html. Copies can also be sent via fax by calling 800-638-8736, select option 1, then option 1.

Additional resources for this subject area can be obtained from "**Additional Resources for Special Emphasis Initiatives**" on the Funding Opportunities page of the EOWS website at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/eows/funding.htm. Also, sites may get information from the Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration website at www.samhsa.gov/.

F. Methamphetamine Lab/Environmental Activities

Addressing The Hazards Resulting From the Presence of Methamphetamine Laboratories, Lead-Based Paint, Lead In Exposed Soil, or Asbestos Containing Materials

Clandestine methamphetamine laboratories pose unique problems for law enforcement because of the volatility, flammability, and toxicity of the chemicals used. This Special Emphasis Area provides funds for training, equipment, and contractor expenses needed to handle, contain, and dispose of these dangerous substances. Interested applicants should request from EOWS copies of (1) OJP's assessment of the environmental, health, and safety risks associated with this activity and (2) the special condition that will apply to any grant funds used for this activity and that is intended to minimize these risks. Applicants should also consult with DEA concerning the most cost-effective means for complying with resulting disposal requirements.

Because of the age of their housing stock and public buildings, older neighborhoods in urban areas across the country can disproportionately expose their occupants to the health risks associated with the presence of deteriorating lead based paint, lead dust, lead in bare soil, and building materials containing damaged friable asbestos (often encountered in buildings seized through the Weed and Seed property transfer initiative). Resulting adverse health effects, such as elevated blood lead levels in children from exposure to lead hazards, can seriously impact the affected residents ability to have productive, law-abiding lives. Additionally, the deteriorating building conditions which serve as the pathway for these health risks, if left unaddressed, can result in the abandonment of the affected buildings and reduced housing stock.

EOWS funds available through this Special Emphasis Area may be used to support lead hazard reduction and asbestos abatement programs within the Weed and Seed area. However, applicants are first encouraged to seek funding for these activities from existing funding streams intended for these purposes. Any such proposal must demonstrate the applicant's awareness of and ability to conduct the proposed activities in accordance with all applicable Federal, state, and local laws.

If any component of the proposal may include the removal of lead based paint, lead in soil, asbestos-containing materials, or other hazardous materials, the proposal must also address how these materials will be disposed of and the legal sufficiency of the disposal process.

Examples of how EOWS funding may be used include:

- Dismantling of Clandestine Methamphetamine Laboratories
- Education and outreach
- Hazard identification and risk assessment
- Training and certification programs for risk assessors, inspectors, and abatement personnel
- Abatement/remediation of identified hazardous conditions to include required remodeling or renovation
- Disposal of lead or asbestos-containing materials, as well as chemicals, equipment, and wastes from seized methamphetamine laboratories
- Screening children for elevated blood lead levels

EOWS funding may not be used for:

- Acquisition of property
- Construction

Brownfields Activities

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) defines brownfields as abandoned, idled, or under-used industrial and commercial facilities where expansion or redevelopment is complicated by real or perceived environmental contamination. Brownfields can most effectively be revitalized through comprehensive community and economic development strategies. Returning these sites to productive use creates jobs, revitalizes urban areas, and addresses the economic development needs of communities in and around such sites.

In order to support community health and economic development, EOWS is committed to helping communities revitalize such properties. However, before seeking Weed and Seed funding for this purpose, sites must seek funding from existing programs such as those housed at EPA. If that avenue proves ineffective, up to \$50,000.00 may be used to support a Brownfield initiative where the designated site overlaps with the Weed and Seed designated area. All restrictions on EPA's use of funding cited in the Comprehensive Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) apply to recipients of EOWS Brownfields Special Emphasis Initiative funding. **In addition to the budget summary and worksheet, your Brownfields Special Emphasis proposal must include a map of your brownfields area(s) and one to two pages of background information on your brownfields initiative, and possible environmental assessment information, as further discussed below. The background section should describe the factual and historical context for the potentially affected site(s) and community, and discuss the ultimate goal of your overall brownfields effort.**

Examples of how EOWS funding may be used include:

- Education and outreach to inform and involve citizens and businesses.
- Building partnerships and outreach among stakeholders, including Federal and state agencies, tribes, municipalities, community groups, and businesses.
- Community involvement or environmental justice planning
- Reuse planning, assessment, and evaluation
- Renovating existing facilities
- Cleanup or other response activities associated with such cleanups (e.g. groundwater extraction and treatment, landscaping and similar site renewal activities.)
- Fostering local job development and training initiatives
- Assisting not-for-profit entities in economic development projects

EOWS funding may **not** be used for:

- Acquisition of property
- Construction that is not related to eligible cleanup activities

Application of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to Some Environmental Activities:

Some proposals will require applicants to provide additional information and assistance in assessing the potential environmental impacts of the proposed activities. Examples of these proposals include those involving renovation, cleanup and other response activities, and eligible construction activities. The EOWS website (www.ojp.usdoj.gov/eows/funding.htm) contains the minimum environmental information required to be submitted for an application that includes a renovation project, information on the preparation of an environmental assessment, and an applicant's responsibilities for assisting EOWS in the completion of an assessment. Applicants submitting proposals that require the completion of an environmental assessment will be informed by EOWS as soon as possible following EOWS' review of the application.

Additional resources for this subject area can be obtained from "**Additional Resources for Special Emphasis Initiatives**" on the Funding Opportunities page of the EOWS website at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/eows/funding.htm.

G. Victim Services

This initiative focuses on programs and services to address the rights, safety, and healing of victims. Weed and Seed funds are to be used to fill in gaps not covered by other resources. Depending on the needs of the designated neighborhood(s), strategies can be developed to address an array of topics such as: victims' compensation, costs, and rights; family violence; hate and bias-related violence; special needs of child and elderly victims; mental health services for crime victims; multi-cultural issues; survivors of homicide victims; victims of juvenile offenders; and legal remedies. In addition, training for law enforcement personnel and other service providers is vital to enable them to respond effectively and sensitively to victims. For instance, as the first responder to the crime, the police officer and his/her treatment of the victim plays a critical role in the victim's recovery process. Funds for this initiative may be used for activities such as training for law enforcement and support personnel, counseling services, workshops, educational and resource materials, and legal assistance. Sites will first wish to make use of existing victims' assistance funding, however, before submitting a request to EOWS (see below).

The OJP Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) provides funding to programs around the country to assist victims and improve victim services. In every state, OVC supports local crime victim assistance and compensation programs through Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funds that are disbursed by state VOCA administrators. In addition, in many of the Weed and Seed sites, OVC provides funds to demonstration programs to develop local victim service delivery models that can be replicated in other communities nationwide. Both the VOCA and demonstration programs could serve as valuable local resources to Weed and Seed sites. Resources for this subject area can be obtained from "**Additional Resources for Special Emphasis Initiatives**" on the Funding Opportunities page of the EOWS website at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/eows/funding.htm. Additionally, sites also can obtain information about resources and grants available on combating violence against women from the Office on Violence Against Women website at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/vawo/.

H. Re-Entry Programs for Offenders

The purpose of this initiative is to enhance public safety by reducing criminal victimization by this high risk group. More than 630,000 offenders are released from prison every year. The re-entry initiative seeks to address inmates' risk factors beginning in the institution to reduce their following the inmate upon release into Weed and Seed communities. This is particularly important for inmates who have completed full terms and are not subject to any post-release supervision.

Funding under the Weed and Seed initiative can complement such a program by paying for life skills training, job readiness training, job placement and follow-up, career counseling, family counseling, health care, mental health care treatment, literacy training, and parenting issues for offenders re-entering Weed and Seed communities. Funding of these services are restricted to inmates to be released into Weed and Seed areas. In addition, the Weed and Seed approach to this issue will focus on improving coordination and utilization of existing resources and programs as well as new activities.

Weed and Seed sites also are encouraged to coordinate with State grantees of the serious and violent offender re-entry program, a new initiative issued January 31, 2002, by the Office of Justice Programs in collaboration with several other Federal agencies.

For further information on establishing re-entry programs for offenders, applicants should consult the following website: www.ojp.usdoj.gov/reentry/whats_new.htm.

I. Local Evaluation

Evaluation is an important tool for program assessment and fine-tuning. The documentation of program successes in an evaluation can also help a site to attract additional resources. The addition of Local Evaluation as a Special Emphasis Initiative Area will provide sites with an additional option for supporting this important program function.

The evaluation should examine both the process of implementation and the impact of Weed and Seed activities in the designated area. A discussion of evaluation appears in the *Executive Office for Weed and Seed Implementation Manual*. Another excellent resource is *Evaluating a Weed and Seed Strategy* (NCJ 191723). This guide provides a step-by-step approach to a comprehensive local Weed and Seed evaluation. It is available in .pdf and text formats at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/eows/publications.htm.

The local evaluation should be conducted by a local research partner distinct from the entities directly involved in implementing the program. The independence of the evaluator will help establish the credibility of the evaluation. Local institutions of higher education may be able to provide both faculty and student assistance in performing the evaluation. If a site needs assistance in finding a research partner, please contact Dionne Mitchell of EOWS at (202) 616-1152 or Steve Edwards of the National Institute of Justice at (202) 307-0500.

J. Prevention Specialty Programs (includes Truancy Prevention, Conflict Resolution, Prevention Through the Arts, Mentoring, and Computer Learning Centers)

1) Truancy Prevention

Truancy is a leading indicator that trouble is ahead for an adolescent. Truants are not receiving the education and other assistance they can obtain in school, and can all too easily fill up idle hours with criminal activity. Funding under this initiative can pay for officers assigned to truancy duty and equipment needed by them and for programs (in schools or Safe Havens) that succeed in getting school-age youths off the streets and back into school. Coordination with schools can help ensure that school disciplinary policies do not simply push out at-risk youth with no alternative activities or supervision, and that school disciplinary procedures take into account how students are affected by gang pressures.

Truancy is often linked to youth criminal activities, but can also be an indicator that a child may be the victim of criminal behavior such as abuse, neglect or domestic violence. Depending on the needs and goals of each site, truancy prevention programs may include funding for officers, school representatives, case managers, outreach workers or other personnel whose duties are to work directly with truant youth. Partnerships between school, police, juvenile court and child welfare officials are encouraged, as are programs that link truancy prevention, intervention and follow-up to Safe Haven activities such as mentoring.

Funding can also be used to purchase equipment or cover costs of expenses for use in truancy prevention program. Examples include vehicle expenses or computer software that can enhance programs to identify chronically absent students and develop intervention strategies for such high-risk youth.

Truancy Prevention Example 1

The Police Department, in the belief that the presence of school-aged youth on the streets during the school day increases the likelihood of both young criminal offenders and young victims, institutes an anti-truancy program. The city has four full-time truancy officers and one of the four is funded to work exclusively in the designated neighborhood. Working during school hours, the officers identify youth on the street, and determine their age and the reason for their absence from school. In addition, the truancy officers are notified by Weed and Seed officers and other patrol officers about youth to be questioned. Those youth without a valid excuse for being away from school are escorted back.

Truancy Prevention Example 2

Of the neighborhood police officers assigned to the Weed and Seed neighborhood, one officer is assigned to the designated area schools to help reduce truancy, violence, and resolve other problems. Once or twice a week, the officer collects names of students who have been truant and visits their homes to assess why the student is absent. In certain cases, the officer may accompany a social worker on a home visit. If the officer finds a student absent without cause, either at home or on the street, they will escort them back to school. Officers are also trained in the curriculum of GREAT to encourage the elementary school students to remain gang- and drug-free. Students can also participate in after-school activities at school or the neighborhood Safe Haven. Alternatively, Boys and Girls Club professional staff can perform this function in tandem with neighborhood police officers.

Sites can review a variety of publications that address truancy as well as learn about potential funding opportunities on the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) website at <http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/index.html>. Sites should coordinate their Weed and Seed initiative with any existing OJJDP-funded programs in the community. Additional information about resources for this subject area can be obtained from “**Additional Resources for Special Emphasis Initiatives**” on the Funding Opportunities page of the EOWS website at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/eows/funding.htm.

2) Conflict Resolution

At a time when arguments can and do lead to gun battles, it is important to teach both youths and adults the skills of settling disputes peacefully, and providing mediation and problem-solving services for area residents. Initiatives to be funded should teach ways to constructively work through differences and to design mechanisms to resolve both personal and group problems, thus reducing tension and preventing violence. Programs can be coordinated with schools, youth serving organizations, community mediation programs, law enforcement, Safe Havens, and others.

While many of the Weed and Seed sites have on-going efforts in this area, this solicitation offers the opportunity to expand or enhance as well as establish conflict resolution and mediation programs and to forge new community partnerships. Depending on the needs and desires of the particular site, these programs may: (1) teach young people and /or adults techniques for solving conflict in a positive manner, (2) teach young people, adults, or staff how to be mediators themselves, (3) establish actual conflict resolution or mediation programs in designated areas such as schools, youth organizations, juvenile justice facilities, and Safe Havens, and (4) provide designated area residents access to already existing conflict resolution, mediation, and collaborative problem solving services in the community.

In the past several years, the use and application of conflict resolution skills and interventions have greatly expanded. New initiatives have included gang-related mediation and facilitation, parent and teen mediation, truancy mediation, race and ethnicity study circles, community problem-solving, victim-offender dialogues, family group conferencing, youth and police partnerships, community mediation and community policing partnerships, and intergroup dispute resolution and violence prevention. Once your site identifies its problem areas, assess whether a conflict resolution approach may be an appropriate strategy to address the situation.

Conflict resolution resources are becoming more readily available throughout the country; today there are well over 500 community mediation programs in the United States and over thirty state offices of dispute resolution, as well as state and national associations. Consider partnering with your local or state dispute resolution center and together design a partnership to meet the needs of your site. Typically, community mediation programs offer some or all of these services: individual and group case handling; conflict resolution and mediation training; community education and outreach; and dispute resolution referral and systems design.

A Sample Conflict Resolution Strategy

Metro Mediation Center will provide conflict resolution skills training to the after-school program sponsored by the Safe Haven. The Center will offer communication and problem solving classes based upon the types of problems and confrontations that the youth daily encounter. Additionally, the Center working with the Safe Haven, will design a case referral system to provide mediation services to truant and runaway youth and their parents and care takers. The schools and local law enforcement will be partners in the project and help design outreach and referral strategies. For example, when law enforcement personnel encounter a neighborhood dispute involving the playing of loud music, the officer will refer the parties to Metro Mediation Center so that together the neighbors can resolve their differences before the situation results in violence.

Information about resources for this subject area can be obtained from “**Additional Resources for Special Emphasis Initiatives**” on the Funding Opportunities page of the EOWS website at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/eows/funding.htm.

3) Prevention Through the Arts

Providing constructive and engrossing activities which encourage youths to discover their own artistic abilities can keep them on the right path, introduce them to options previously unknown to them, and as a result prevent future criminal involvement. Programs in this category can combine creative activities, skills training, and arts career awareness. Grant funds can help provide staffing, space, and materials. Special consideration will be given to programs which emphasize discovering and developing a child’s artistic abilities, while providing children with an understanding of the options available in individual arts fields.

Examples of activities to be funded include:

- ◆ A music or choral program that teaches participants to sing or play a musical instrument;
- ◆ An applied art class that teaches and encourages art skills in drawing, painting, or sculpture;
- ◆ A class teaching basics in photography and promoting photography as a creative art (more than a project which only provides children with disposable cameras rather than teaching basic skills);
- ◆ A class or activity which promotes the original writing of literature--fiction, poetry, or drama;
- ◆ An activity which teaches or promotes theater projects, allowing the children to participate in all facets of stage production, such as writing, acting, or producing;
- ◆ An activity that teaches dance performance;
- ◆ Salary of an Arts Coordinator or Boys and Girls Club staff person to ensure all arts activities are presented to Weed and Seed children as options.

Applicants in this category must:

- ◆ indicate how they will recruit and maintain attendance for youths who are at risk;
- ◆ indicate a relationship or some previous collaborative activity with a recognized arts organization and have a signed Memorandum of Agreement indicating this relationship;
- ◆ indicate the artistic credentials of the primary instructor.

4) Mentoring

Mentoring provides children with role models and life skills guidance, as well as instruction in specific topics. The objective of mentoring is reduction in drug demand and criminal behavior as well as increasing the youths' capacity to find and hold good jobs. Sites may apply for funding for payment of Boys and Girls Club program costs or training of volunteer mentors, space, coordinating personnel, vehicles, instructional materials, liability insurance premiums, and other costs of establishing or enhancing mentoring programs. These costs can also include those of special events (e.g., movies, sporting events, plays, concerts, field trips, etc.), provided that such costs are reimbursable and that outings are supported by mentoring objectives such as enhancing self-esteem, communication skills, cultural awareness, and leadership. Requested costs can include those of operating or enhancing Drug Education For Youth (DEFY) mentoring activities. Volunteers can be recruited from community organizations, law enforcement, the military, churches, senior citizen centers, and schools. Careful background screening of volunteers is required (see page 12 of this Application Kit). Mentoring activities should be coordinated with the site's Safe Haven(s).

5) Computer Learning Centers

The objective of this initiative is to bridge to technological competence and employability for residents of Weed and Seed sites. Funds may be used to acquire computer hardware and software for use in teaching literacy, preparing for GEDs, preparing for jobs where computers are used or programmed or repaired, developing a website, networking schools, community services, government organizations and other local organizations; and starting up businesses in technology and telecommunications. Funds may also be used to provide the infrastructure needed for planning and running the computer learning center, including setting up the center, planning and budgeting, scheduling classes, marketing outreach, staffing and running classes.

This initiative area is modeled on the successful "Seedtech" program which has already provided computer learning centers to a number of Weed and Seed sites. Sites which select this special emphasis initiative area may use the services of the Weed and Seed "Seedtech" provider—Urban Technology Center (UTC) Inc., a nonprofit corporation, to build the technological and administrative capabilities of the site by providing consulting services and support, recommend and procure hardware, software, and Internet Service. UTC can be reached at (800) 998-3212.

K. Neighborhood Restoration

The Neighborhood Restoration Special Emphasis Initiative area seeks to assist Weed and Seed communities to find viable avenues to help "fix broken windows" and ensure sustainable Weed and Seed activities for the long term. There are a variety of approaches that can be funded in this area, for example: community clean-ups; strategic planning for neighborhood economic development; facilitating partnerships and organizational restructuring; small business retention; small business development training and start-up projects; job preparedness and job skills training. These activities should be fully coordinated with the Weed and Seed strategy as overseen by the site's Steering Committee in a way that reflects the interrelationship of public safety and neighborhood restoration.

In considering this area, sites may wish to consult with their local chamber of commerce and local Small Business Administration office, as well as technical assistance partners which have experience in working with Weed and Seed sites. Additional resources for this subject area can be obtained from "**Additional Resources for Special Emphasis Initiatives**" on the Funding Opportunities page of the EOWS website at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/eows/funding.htm.

Guidelines for the Evaluation of Information Obtained in State and National Criminal Background Checks on Potential Employees and Volunteers Who May Have Access to Children, the Elderly, and Individuals with Disabilities at Weed and Seed Sites

Background: When a person entrusted with the care of particularly vulnerable individuals (i.e., children, the elderly, or the disabled) abuses those individuals and then is found to have previously abused others or have a criminal background – questions and potential liabilities arise. In order to address this compelling public interest, the federal government and most states have enacted legislation that authorizes criminal record checks, including FBI fingerprint criminal record checks, on various persons who work with these vulnerable individuals (the protocols for these checks were addressed in previous memorandum dated November 5, 2002). The primary purpose of this legislation (including the National Child Protection Act [NCPA], Pub. L. No. 103-209, and the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 [VCCLEA], Pub. L. No. 103-222) is to identify the potentially abusive persons and protect the vulnerable individuals.

The EOWS Program Guide and Application Kit has required background screening for several years. Once that screening is done and criminal records information is received, it is important to have consistent standards for the evaluation of this information. Therefore, uniform guidelines for the evaluation of this information need to be established. Also, to the extent possible, the hiring of the employee or the placement of the volunteer should be delayed until the entire screening process, including the evaluation of any criminal history, is completed. At a minimum, the potential employee or volunteer must be restricted to supervised situations or situations in which another worker is present when dealing with vulnerable individuals until the screening process is complete. This is consistent with the suggestions provided by an Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) publication entitled Guidelines for the Screening of Persons Working with Children, the Elderly, and Individuals with Disabilities in Need of Support, NCJ 167248 (referenced in the EOWS Program Guide and Application Kit). The publication gives the following factors to consider:

1. The relationship between the incident and the type of employee or service that the applicant will provide.
2. The applicant's employment or volunteer history before and after the incident.
3. The applicant's efforts and success at rehabilitation.
4. The likelihood that the incident would prevent the applicant from his or her responsibilities in a manner consistent with the safety and welfare of the consumers served by the agency.
5. The circumstances and/or factors indicating the incident is likely to be repeated.
6. The nature, severity, number, and consequences of the incidents disclosed.
7. The circumstances surrounding each incident, including contributing societal or environmental conditions.
8. The age of the individual at the time of the incident.
9. The amount of time lapsed since the incident occurred.

Given the gravity of the compelling public interest involved, the factors delineated above should be interpreted in a manner that provides the greatest protection to the vulnerable individuals. Therefore, the following guidelines are to be used when evaluating criminal history information concerning applicants (which term is to be understood to include persons who have already begun work at the site):

- The applicant must not have felony convictions of any type or any misdemeanor convictions involving violence, fraud, or criminal sexual misconduct.
- The applicant must not have any conviction for an offense against a child or dependent adult.

- The applicant must not have any misdemeanor convictions involving a breach of the peace or drug related offenses within the past five years proceeding the date of the background check.
- Applicants with previous military employment must not have been convicted of any court-martial higher than a summary court martial.

These guidelines will help further the primary purpose-identifying the potentially abusive persons and protecting the vulnerable individuals of the NCPA while, at the same time, staying within the spirit of the recommendations in OJJDP publication NCJ 167248. For further information or elaboration on these guidelines contact the Executive Office for Weed and Seed at (202) 616-1152.

Any waiver from this policy must be requested in writing by memorandum from the U.S. Attorney to the Executive Office for Weed and Seed, along with accompanying documentation.

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